

Bicycle Safety

The bottom line — if you ride a bike, you're at risk for injury.

Bicycle riding often results in skinned knees and a band-aid is all you need. However, in 2000, bicycle-related crashes resulted in 627,160 emergency room visits and 690 deaths across America. The most frequent cause of death in a bicycle crash is head injury. Across the United States, one bicycle-related head injury is seen in a hospital emergency room every 3 minutes and someone dies every 15 hours.

Each year in NC, approximately 1,000 bicyclists are involved in police-reported crashes with motor vehicles. On average, 30 are killed and an additional 160 are seriously injured.

In Guilford County, there were 47 police-reported bicycle crashes in 2001— the second highest in the state!



Quick Tips

- Always wear a helmet — as many as 75% of bicycle-related deaths could be prevented with a properly used helmet.
- Your helmet should be comfortable and snug, but not too tight. It shouldn't rock back and forth or side to side.
- Wear your helmet centered on top of your head and always buckle the straps. Wearing your helmet tipped back will not offer the needed protection if you have a crash.
- Ride with traffic — not against it. In other words you should ride in the right lane — as far right as possible.
- Use appropriate hand signals.
- Respect all traffic signs and lights and yield to traffic at all intersections.
- Ride a bike that is your size.
- Keep your bike well maintained. The reflectors should be secure, the brakes should work properly, gears should shift smoothly and tires should be tightly secured and properly inflated.
- North Carolina's Child Bicycle Safety Act requires everyone under 16 years of age to wear an approved bicycle helmet when riding.

**For more information
on Bike Safety check
out these resources:**

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/bike

www.bicyclinginfo.org

www.pedbikeinfo.org